

Serial No. 10/669,343
Response dated December 22, 2005 in
Reply to Final Action of November 3, 2005

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A vehicle seat assembly for storage in a floor tub within a vehicle floor, said floor tub defining a substantially longitudinal central tub axis, said seat assembly comprising:

- (a) a seat frame defining a lateral translational axis and a substantially longitudinal medial seat axis;
- (b) a mounting means for mounting said seat frame to said floor tub for selective forward pivotal rotation of said seat frame, in a mounted configuration, between a deployed design configuration and a fully tumbled stored-in-floor configuration; in said deployed design configuration, said medial seat axis having a first substantially horizontal orientation; in said fully tumbled stored-in-floor configuration, said seat frame being positionable within said floor tub with said medial seat axis having a lowered, second substantially horizontal orientation; and
- (c) a lateral translation means for positive inboard displacement of said seat frame along said lateral translational axis during said selective forward pivotal rotation of said seat frame from said deployed design configuration towards said fully tumbled stored-in-floor configuration; in said deployed design configuration, said

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medial seat axis is adapted to be being laterally off-set from said central tub axis when said seat frame is in said mounted configuration; in said fully tumbled stored-in-floor configuration, said medial seat axis being adapted for in substantial alignment with said central tub axis when said seat frame is in said mounted configuration;

wherein said mounting means defines a substantially lateral first pivot axis for said selective forward pivotal rotation of said seat frame thereabout between said deployed design configuration and a raised partially tumbled storable configuration, said raised partially tumbled storable configuration being intermediate of said deployed design configuration and said fully tumbled stored-in-floor configuration; in said raised partially tumbled storable configuration, said medial seat axis being removed from said first substantially horizontal orientation and from said second substantially horizontal orientation;

wherein said lateral translation means comprises a link member securely and diagonally interconnected between said seat frame and said mounting means for three degrees of substantially free angular adjustment of said link member relative to both said seat frame and said mounting means, such that said forward rotation of said seat frame about said first pivot axis from said deployed design configuration towards said raised partially tumbled storable configuration causes progressively coincident inboard displacement of said seat frame along said lateral translational axis; and

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wherein said lateral translation means further comprises a fixed bearing sleeve securely engaging said mounting means and a complementary tube member axially sliding within said sleeve in close frictional fit, with said tube member being rigidly mounted to said seat frame, with said tube member and said sleeve each being in substantially coaxial relation to said lateral translational axis, and with said tube member being adapted for inboard displacement within said sleeve along said lateral translational axis during said forward rotation of said seat frame from said deployed design configuration towards said fully tumbled stored-in-floor configuration.

Claim 2 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Currently amended): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 1 ~~claim 2~~, wherein said mounting means further defines a substantially lateral second pivot axis substantially parallel to said first pivot axis for said selective forward pivotal rotation of said seat frame thereabout between said deployed design configuration and said fully tumbled stored-in-floor configuration.

Claims 4-5 (Canceled).

Claim 6 (currently amended): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 3 ~~claim 5~~, wherein, in said raised partially tumbled storable configuration, said medial seat axis is

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adapted for in substantial alignment with said central tub axis when said seat frame is in said mounted configuration.

Claim 7 (currently amended): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 6, wherein said lateral translational axis is substantially parallel to said first pivot axis and to said second pivot axis, and is adapted to be substantially transverse to said medial seat axis and to said central tub axis when said seat frame is in said mounted configuration.

Claim 8 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 7, wherein said lateral translational axis is in substantially coaxial relation to said first pivot axis, with said tube member being adapted for forward pivotal rotation within said sleeve about said first pivot axis.

Claim 9 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 8, wherein said mounting means comprises a pivot rod in substantially coaxial relation to said second pivot axis, with said pivot rod being mountable in said floor tub, and wherein said mounting means further comprises one or more front mounting legs each interconnected between said pivot rod and said sleeve, such that said forward rotation of said seat frame about said second pivot axis between said deployed design configuration and said fully tumbled stored-in-floor configuration provides for pivotal rotation of each of said front mounting legs about said second pivot axis.

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Claim 10 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 9, further comprising one or more rear mounting legs defining a substantially lateral rear leg pivot axis substantially parallel to said lateral translational axis, with each of said rear mounting legs adapted for selective attachment to said vehicle floor, and with each of said rear mounting legs pivotally mounted on said seat frame for selective pivotal retraction about said rear leg pivot axis relative to said seat frame as said seat frame is rotated as aforesaid between said deployed design configuration and said fully tumbled stored-in-floor configuration.

Claim 11 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 10, further comprising rear leg folding means operatively engaging said lateral translation means for positive pivotal retraction of said rear mounting legs about said lateral rear leg pivot axis during said rotation of said seat frame between said deployed design configuration and said fully tumbled stored-in-floor configuration.

Claim 12 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 11, wherein said one or more front mounting legs comprise a first front mounting leg and a second front mounting leg laterally off-set from said first front mounting leg along said second pivot axis.

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Claim 13 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 12, wherein said link member comprises a rod member securely and diagonally interconnected as aforesaid by means of a first ball joint and a second ball joint positioned one each at opposite ends of said rod member, with said first ball joint operatively connected to said second front mounting leg, and with said second ball joint operatively connected to said seat frame.

Claim 14 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 13, wherein said second ball joint is operatively connected to an outboard portion of said seat frame.

Claim 15 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 14, wherein said one or more rear mounting legs comprise a first rear mounting leg and a second rear mounting leg laterally off-set from said first rear mounting leg along said rear leg pivot axis.

Claim 16 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 15, wherein said rear leg folding means comprises a movable inner wire surrounded by an outer concentric sheath, said movable inner wire being operatively interconnected between said sleeve and said first rear mounting leg, with said sheath fixedly mounted on an inboard portion of said seat frame.

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Claim 17 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 16, wherein said rear leg folding means further comprises a slave tube member rigidly interconnected between said first rear mounting leg and said second rear mounting leg to cause positive pivotal retraction of said second rear mounting leg in unison with positive pivotal retraction of said first rear mounting leg during said rotation of said seat frame between said deployed design configuration and said fully tumbled stored-in-floor configuration.

Claim 18 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 17, wherein said rear leg folding means is adapted for positive pivotal retraction of said rear mounting legs about said lateral rear leg pivot axis during said rotation of said seat frame between said deployed design configuration and said partially tumbled storable configuration.

Claim 19 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 18, wherein said medial seat axis has a substantially vertical seat orientation in said raised partially tumbled storable configuration.

Claim 20 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 19, wherein said rear mounting legs are biased towards a substantially extended leg orientation.

Claim 21 (original): A vehicle seat assembly according to claim 20, wherein said rear leg

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folding means is further adapted to maintain said rear mounting legs in a substantially vertical leg orientation during said rotation of said seat frame between said deployed design configuration and said partially tumbled storable configuration.